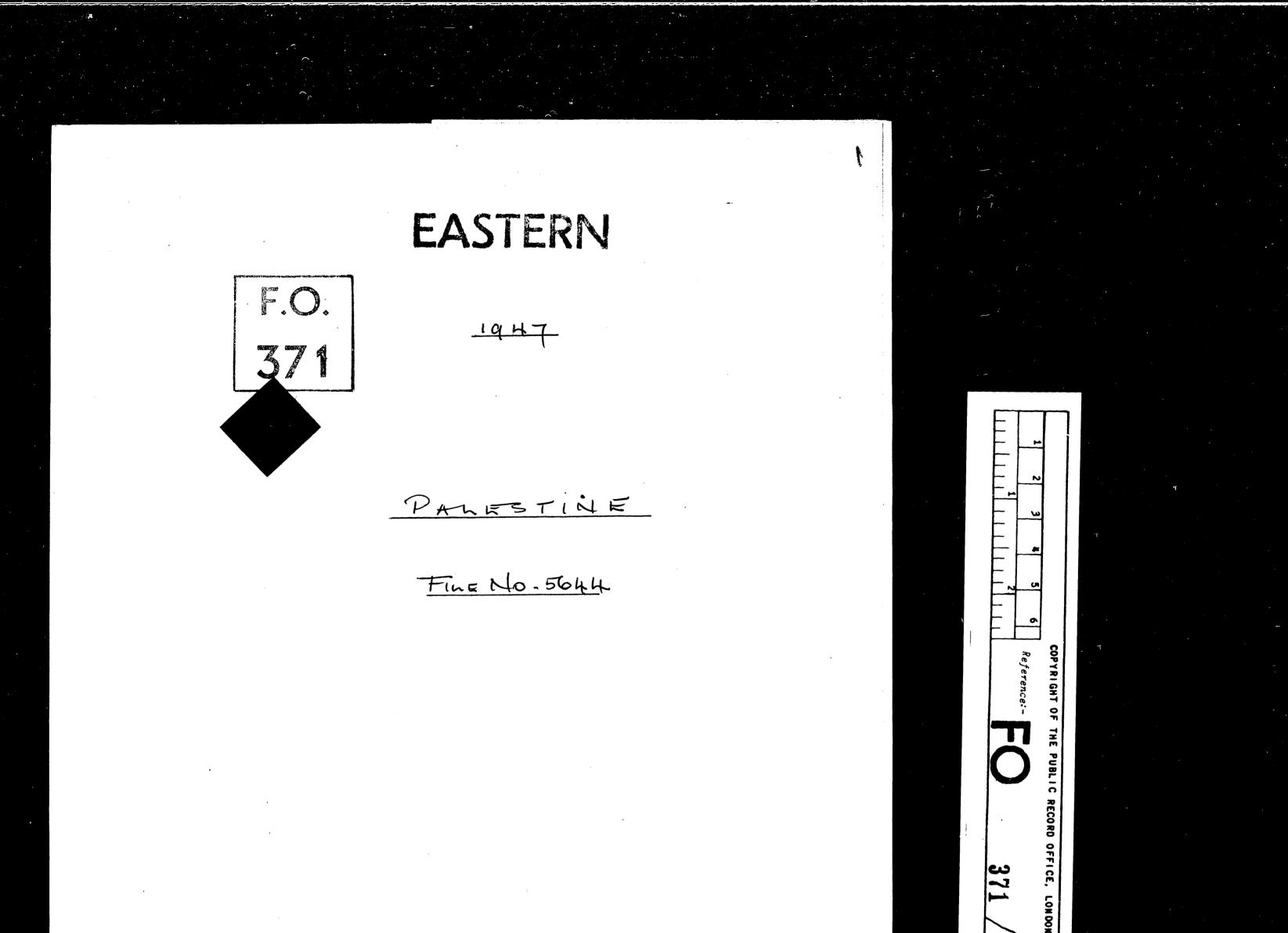
## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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2 E E 5644 1947 30 JUN PALESTINE ESCHARGERANSI. Purchase of Lite / Horoge report at EL MANSOURA. Registry Number copy of letter from transary ugF/ce cos200/437/c ssognar/2 of 26 Fund FROM TRACTING Requiring the only declaring the arrhout of the oils of the storage reget at 20 manoury must theif a. No. banned. Dated Received in Registry 30 JULA (194) Last Paper. (Minutes.) References. M.E. Sundagiet ( To you know anything about this? ) (Print.) 7.Berly 12) Nas see Admiralty letter of July Bud. (How disposed of.) Not R.G. Williams & allow altached. ew \$/7. admin ang 16 The Bester 61936 No action required conters on 61936 consultant of Adminalty. H3. 7/ 3. P.P. Higham. B.O. & R.G. Williams, admity 46441/2/27 7/8. (Index) (Action completed.) DNG. MIE fade. Next Paper. Wt 24772/717 17855 10/38 F.O.I'.

With Mr. Oram's compliments - H- C- Hin c.05200/437/6. Tree s.50945/E 5611 Treasury Chambers, S.W.1. <sup>1</sup>26th June, 1947. 30 Dear Williams,

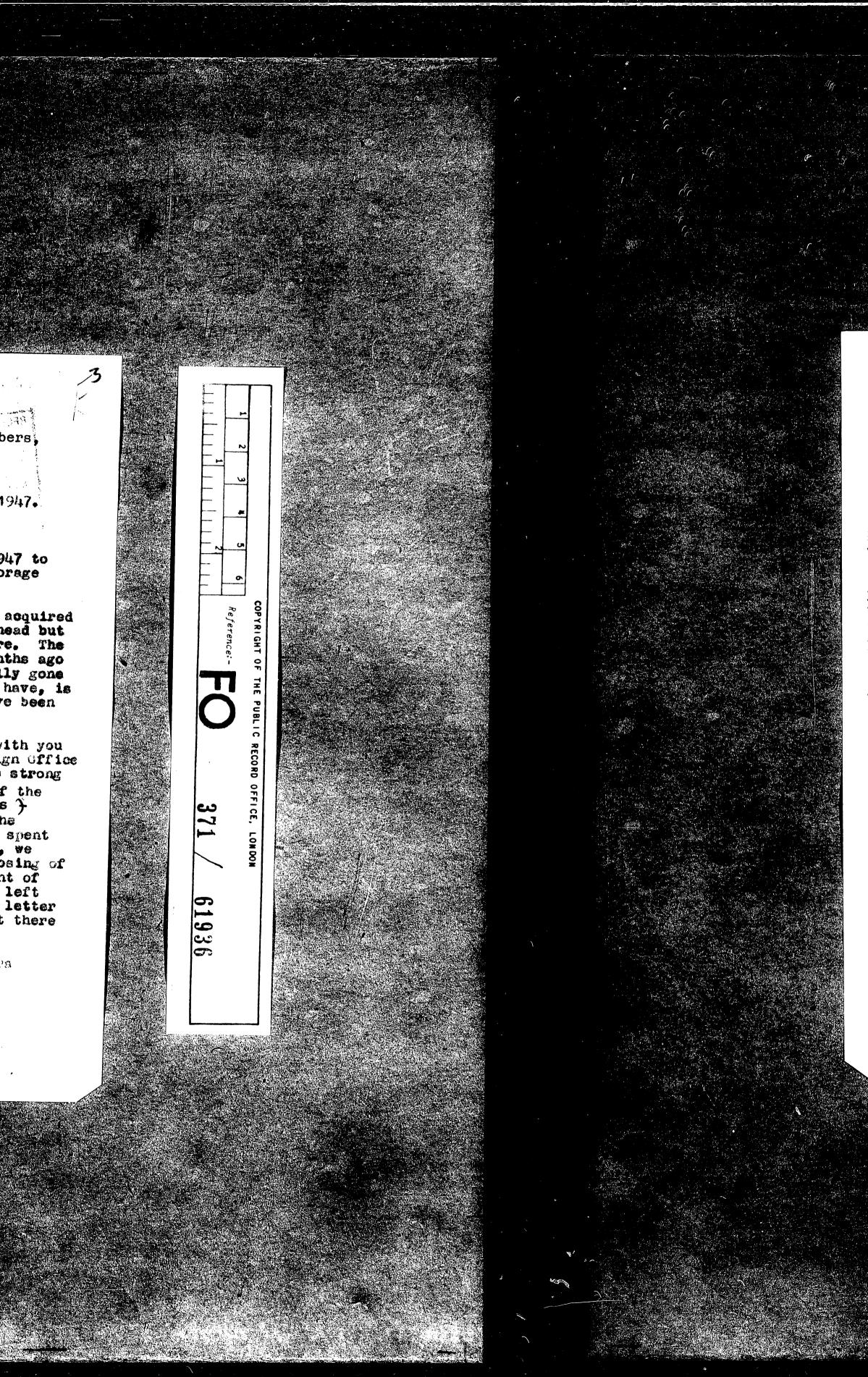
I refer to your letter of the 12th June, 1947 to Graham about the purchase of the site of the Storage Depot at 81 mansoura, near Haifa.

If it is clear that the site cannot now be acquired for less than £10,000, we agree to your going ahead but we should like to know more about this new figure. The increase over the estimate approved about 18 months ago is fairly substantial. Have land prices generally gone up to this extent in that time and even if they have, is it clear that this particular deal could not have been settled much earlier?

As regards the general question, we agree with you that providing the Colonial Office and the Foreign Office (in view of G. 4.0.'s interest in Palestine) see no strong objections on political grounds (on this aspect of the matter you must clearly consult these Departments ) you should if you can, acquire ownership under the existing Ordinance in those cases where you have spent substantial amounts on the sites, but where also, we would add, there seem to be good chances of disposing of the property for commercial purposes in the event of our having to withdraw from the county and being left with no military rights. I gather from Foster's letter of 13th December, 1945 that it was then felt that there would be no difficulty about so disposing of the

/sl Mansoura

R. G. Milliams, Esq., S. G. F. Branch, Admiralty, S.W.1.



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El Mansoura properties, but we should be glad if you would satisfy yourselves that this is still the case.

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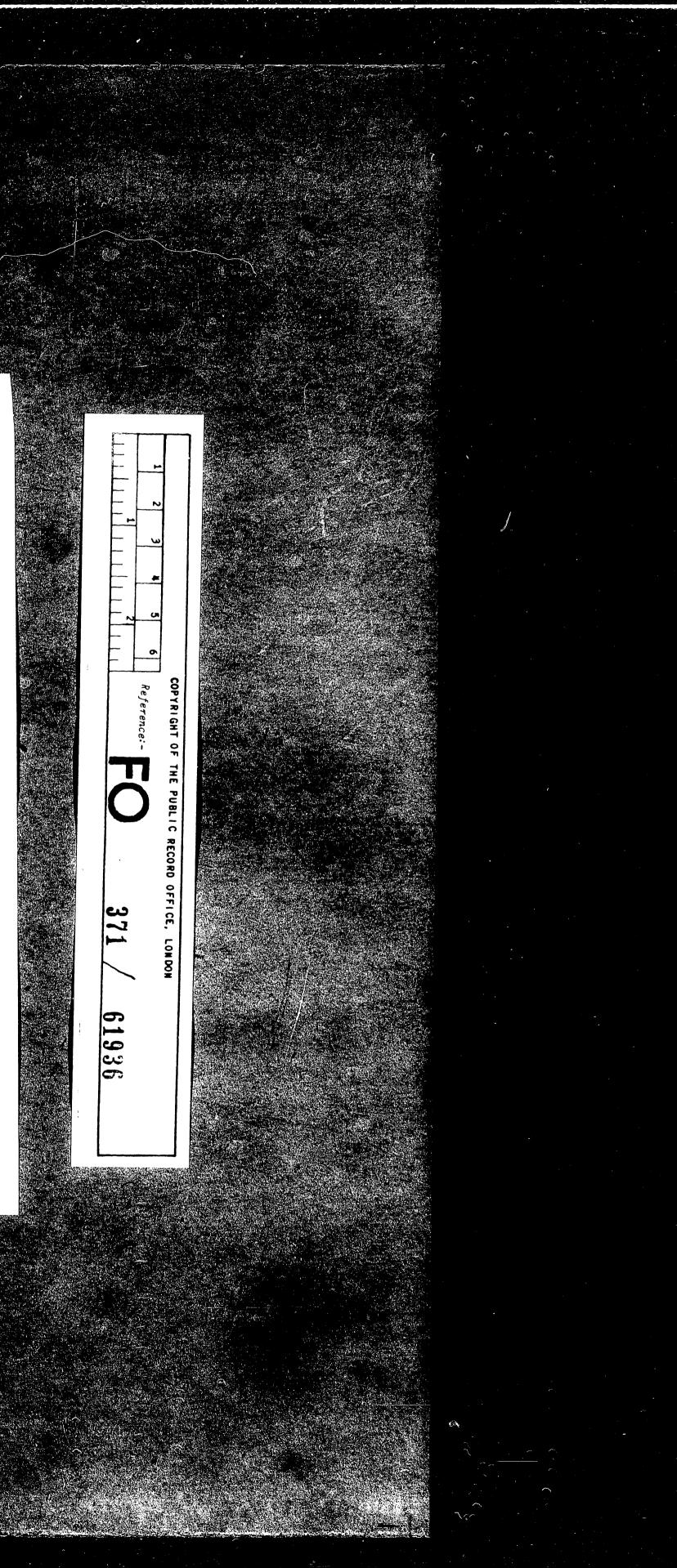
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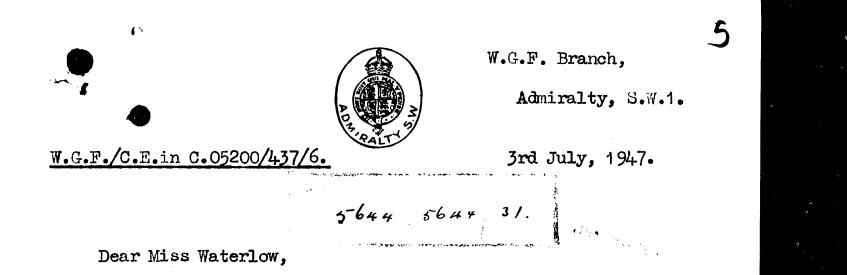
Finally, I understand that you expect that the purchase of other sites in Falestine may amount to some £20,000. We will of course, be prepared to consider these cases on their merits when you are ready, but we trust you will clear up the above points before putting them to us.

I have sent copies of this letter to Higham, Colonel Seymour and to Beeley at the Foreign Office.

Yours sincerely,

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I refer to our conversation over the telephone this morning and as arranged, I am enclosing a copy of my letter to Graham of 12th June about the acquisition of land in Palestine upon which we have spent considerable sums on the construction of depots and the like.

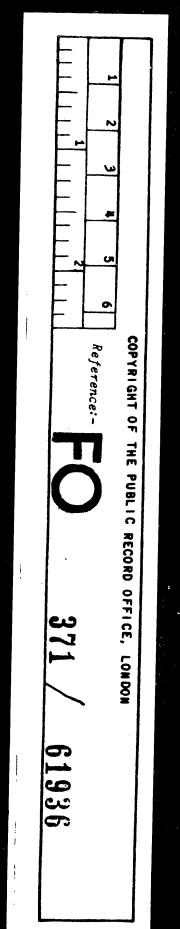
I hope that neither you nor the Colonial Office see any important objections on political grounds to the purchase of the sites by the Admiralty in such cases and I would be glad to know whether you have any comments you would wish to make.

I am copying this letter to Oram, Higham and Colonel Seymour.

Yours sincerely,

Reputinant

Miss Waterlow, Foreign Office, Downing Street, S. W. 1.



<u>O P Y:</u>	x.		
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W.G.F.	C.E.in	C.05200/43	7/6.

W.G.F. Branch,

Admiralty, S.W.1.

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12th June, 1947.

Dear Graham,

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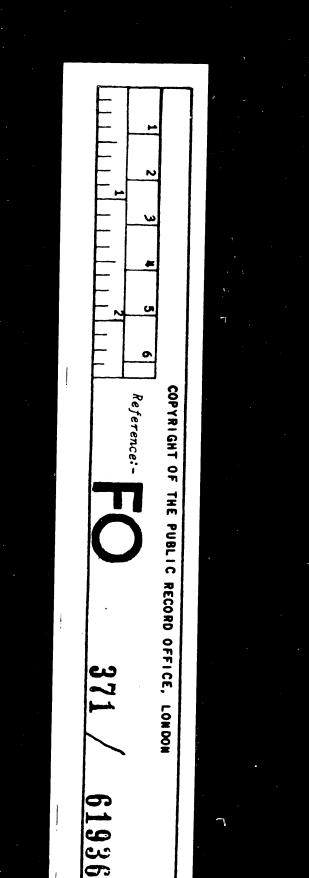
I refer to Oram's letter to Foster of 3rd January, 1946 under Treasury reference S.50945/2 in which sanction was given to the purchase of the site of the Storage Depot at El Mansoura, near Haifa, at an estimated cost of £7,000.

May I briefly summarise the facts of the matter as then reported. The combined Naval and Victualling Storage Depot was erected at a cost of some £155,000 on an area of land which belonged to 32 different owners, mainly tribal settlements. This made it practically impossible to safeguard any residual value by entering into separate negotiations with each individual proprietor and there was, of course, also, a continuing Naval requirement for the Depot. In these circumstances we proposed utilising the Palestine Land (Acquisition for Public Purposes) Ordinance 1943 which enables the Palestine Government to purchase land on behalf of a Service Department at the current market price of such land excluding any increase in value due to war works constructed on the site and to this the Treasury agreed on the basis that the cost of acquisition would be about £7,000.

The estimated value of the site was that given by the Director of Land Settlement about two years ago but the recent official valuation carried out by the Palestine Government indicates that a sum of £10,000 would be required to cover the cost of acquisition and we would like to know whether the Treasury see any objection to purchase at the revised price.

Except for the increased uncertainty as to the part Haifa would play in any future war the views of the Naval Staff are very much as expressed in paragraph 3 of Foster's earlier letter.

While on the subject of Palestine I should like to take the opportunity of mentioning that we have under consideration one or two other purchases of land in the Haifa area. The purchaser prices are such as to place the acquisitions at the discretion of the Admiralty but in view of the uncertainty of the political future out there at this moment I am wondering whether you would wish to see the individual cases. When I wrote to you on 11th April I mentioned that we were informed that purchase of a site in order to safeguard the interest of a Service Department in the residual value of any war works it had erected thereon could not be construed as a "public purpose" within the terms of the Land Acquisition Ordinance and that we must have a case for continuing occupation before we can make use of the Ordinance to acquire the land at its unimproved value. In view of this we consider that, unless there are extremely substantial objections on political grounds, we should proceed with the purchase of those sites which we have in mind as soon as possible since if, as a result of a United Nations decision, our interest in Palestine terminates at a fairly early date it seems very likely that we would be in the position of being unable to make out a case for continuing occupation and would, therefore, lose the whole of the value of our improvements.



From the purely financial aspect, and subject to anything you may have to say, there seems a lot to be said in favour of purchasing as soon as possible. If we remain in Palestine for some years we would be able to make full use of our Depots and buildings for as long as they are required for Service purposes and then be in a position to dispose of them, should they become redundant, without any tenure difficulties. On the other hand, if we vacate the country in the very near future, no doubt all H.M.G's assets would be transferred to the new authority with appropriate financial adjustment between the two. In any event it seems essential that we should make good our title in the land but I would appreciate your views.

I am sending copies of this letter to Colonel Seymour at the War Office - you will recall that Army Hirings are looking after our lands interests in the area - and to Higham at the Colonial Office.

Yours sincerely,

(SIGNED) R.G. WILLIAMS.

76441/2/1) Colonial Office, 37 3. Downing Street, intal Office. S.W.1. Bth August, 1947. Neterence 5-644 5-644 31 76441/2/47 Dear Williams,

You sent me a copy of your letter W.G.F./C.E.in C. 05200/437/6.of the 3rd July addressed to Miss Waterlow about the acquisition of land in Palestine. It might certainly appear rather strange if, at the present juncture of consideration of the future of Palestine by United Nations, notice were to be published in the Gazette of the intention to acquire these properties for the use of the Royal Navy. And since the Navy has been in occupation of these properties for some time however we should not wish to attach too much importance to this point, which is, in any case, one primarily for the Foreign Office.

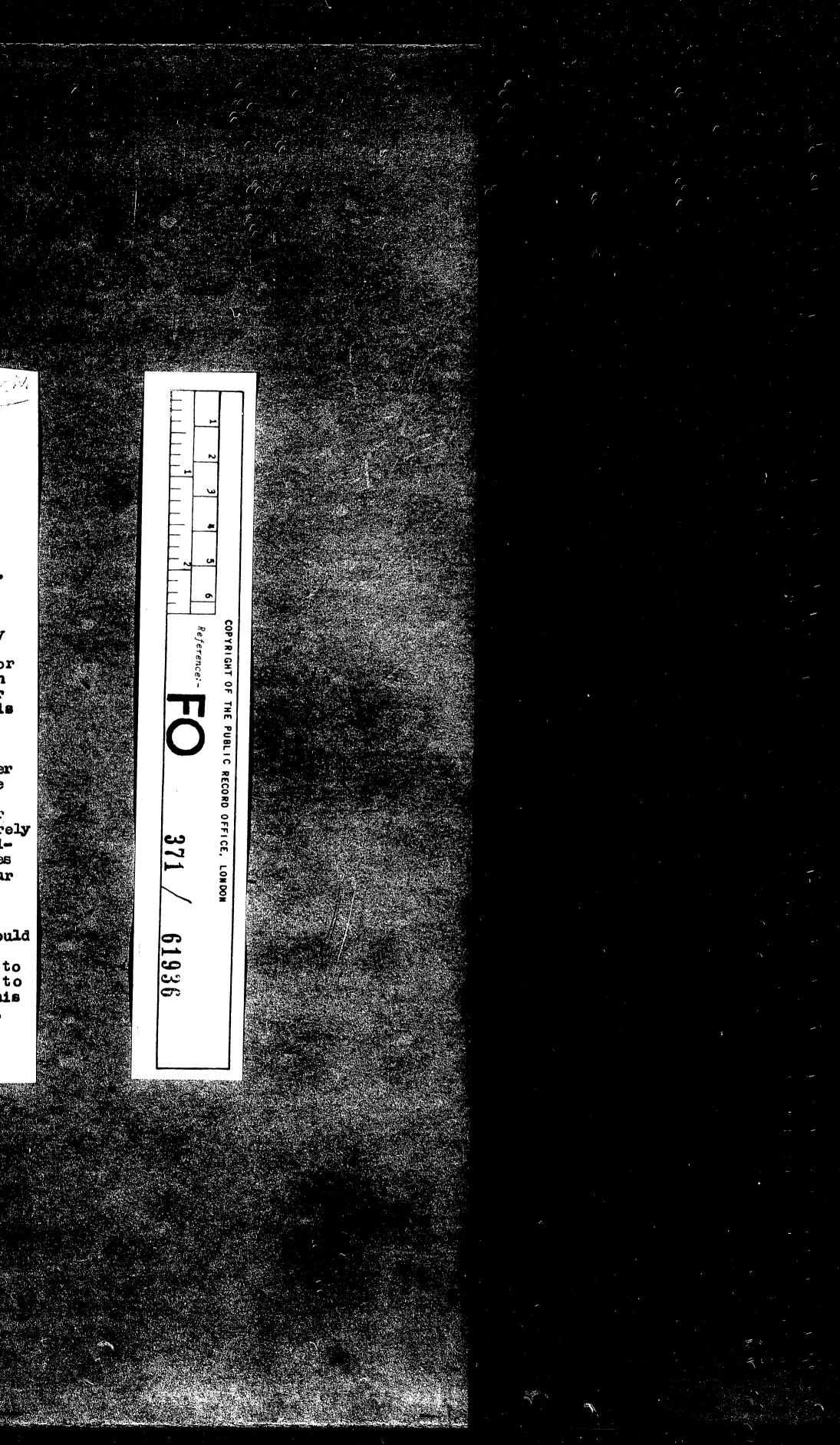
You will be aware that before the High Commissioner can authorise the acquisition of land not only must the intention to do do be published in the Gazette but he must be satisfied that the acquisition is "necessary or expedient for a public purpose". It is of course entirely for the High Commissioner to decide whether the acquisition of the properties in which you are interested comes within the scope of the Ordinance and I merely draw your attention to this possible difficulty.

We suggest, therefore, that, provided the Foreign Office see no insuperable political objections, yeu should now approach the High Commissioner with a request to acquire the land in question. I hope you will be able to make it clear that the Colonial Office have <u>not</u> agreed to the acquisition of any of this land; as I said above this is a matter which the High Commissioner must decide or,

R.G.WILLIAMS, ESQ.

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/if



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if he has my doubts, refer to the Colonial Office through the normal channels. I am copying this letter to Miss Waterlow, Oram and Colonel Seymour. Yours Sincerely,

Yours sincers, 

## (J.D.HIGHAM)

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FII FEnd

16th August, 1947.

Dear Williams,

With reference to the third paragraph of Higham's letter No. 76441/2/47 of the 7th August, I can say that the Foreign Office has no political objections to the course proposed by Higham.

2. I am copying this letter to Higham, Oram and Colonel Seymour.

( D. A. Greenhill. )

R. G. Williams, Esq., The Admiralty, LONDON, S.W. 1.

